

1. A foldable protective garment comprising:

an outer shell shaped to fit about at least part of the body of a wearer, said outer shell being foldable into a compact position; and

a pouch coupled to said outer shell, said pouch being shaped and sized to receive

5 generally all of said outer shell therein when said outer shell is in said compact position, said pouch including an upper mouth and a lower mouth located on a generally opposite side of said pouch relative to said upper mouth, wherein said upper mouth and said lower mouth are both selectively openable and closable.

2. The garment of claim 1 wherein said pouch is movable between an internal position wherein said pouch is generally located inside said outer shell and an external position wherein said pouch is generally located outside said outer shell.

3. The garment of claim 1 further comprising a lower fastening mechanism for selectively closing said lower mouth.

4. The garment of claim 3 wherein said lower fastening mechanism includes a plurality of patches of hook and loop fastening material located adjacent to said lower mouth to enable said selective opening and closing of said lower mouth.

5. The garment of claim 1 further comprising an upper fastening mechanism for selectively closing said upper mouth.

6. The garment of claim 5 wherein said upper fastening mechanism includes a plurality of patches of hook and loop fastening material located adjacent to said upper mouth to enable said selective opening and closing of said upper mouth.

7. The garment of claim 1 wherein said pouch is fixedly coupled to said outer shell generally around the perimeter of said upper mouth.

8. The garment of claim 1 wherein said pouch is located in an inverted configuration when said pouch is said external position as compared to when said pouch is in said internal position.

9. The garment of claim 1 wherein said pouch is configured as a sleeve when said upper mouth and said lower mouth are open.

10. The garment of claim 1 wherein said pouch is configured to generally entirely receive and retain said outer shell therein when said outer shell is in said compact position and placed into said pouch and said upper and lower mouths are closed.

11. The garment of claim 1 wherein said outer shell is shaped to fit over the arms, chest, torso and legs of a wearer.

12. The garment of claim 11 wherein said outer shell is made from a single integral piece of material.

13. The garment of claim 11 wherein said garment includes a pair of legs, and wherein said garment includes a fastener extending from an ankle of one of the pair of legs, around a crotch of said garment, and to an ankle of the other leg so that said garment can be opened and donned over the head of a wearer.

14. The garment of claim 1 wherein said outer shell is abrasion, flame and heat resistant.

15. The garment of claim 14 wherein said outer shell can resist igniting, burning, melting, dripping or separation at a temperature of 500° F for at least five minutes.

16. The garment of claim 14 wherein said outer shell includes a material selected from a group of consisting of an aramid material, a blend of aramid materials, a polybenzamidazole material, and a blend of aramid and polybenzamidazole materials.

17. The garment of claim 14 further comprising a moisture barrier located generally inside of said outer shell such that when said garment is worn said moisture barrier is located generally between said outer shell and a wearer of said garment, said moisture barrier being generally co-extensive with said outer shell and being made of a material that is generally liquid impermeable and generally moisture vapor permeable.

18. The garment of claim 17 wherein said moisture barrier includes expanded polytetrafluoroethylene.

19. The garment of claim 17 further comprising a thermal liner located generally inside said outer shell such that when said garment is worn said thermal liner is located generally between said outer shell and a wearer of said garment.

20. The garment of claim 19 wherein said moisture barrier is generally located between said outer shell and said thermal liner.

21. The garment of claim 19 wherein said thermal liner includes a material selected from a group consisting of an aramid needlepunch material, an aramid batting material, an aramid non-woven material, an aramid-blend needlepunch material, an aramid-blend batting material and an aramid-blend non-woven material.

22. The garment of claim 19 further comprising a face cloth layer located inside of said thermal liner and located to be the innermost layer of said garment.

23. A foldable protective garment comprising:

an outer shell shaped to fit about at least part of the body of a wearer;

a moisture barrier located generally inside of said outer shell such that when said garment is worn, said moisture barrier is located generally between said outer shell and a wearer of said garment, said moisture barrier being generally co-extensive with said outer shell and being made of a material that is generally liquid impermeable and generally moisture vapor permeable;

a thermal liner located generally inside said outer shell such that when said garment is worn said thermal liner is located generally between said outer shell and a wearer of
10 said garment; and

a pouch coupled to at least one of said outer shell, moisture barrier or thermal liner, said pouch being movable between an internal position wherein said pouch is generally located inside said outer shell and an external position wherein said pouch is generally located outside said outer shell, said pouch being shaped and sized to receive generally all of said outer
15 shell, moisture barrier and thermal liner therein.

24. The garment of claim 23 wherein said pouch includes an upper mouth and a lower mouth located on a generally opposite side of said pouch relative to said upper mouth, wherein said upper mouth and said lower mouth are both selectively openable and closable.

25. The garment of claim 24 further comprising a lower fastening mechanism for selectively closing said lower mouth and an upper fastening mechanism for selectively closing said upper mouth.

26. A method for storing a protective garment comprising the steps of:

providing a protective garment having an outer shell shaped to fit about at least part of the body of a wearer and pouch coupled to said outer shell, said pouch having an upper mouth and lower mouth;

5 opening said upper mouth and said lower mouths such that said pouch is in a generally sleeve-like configuration;

folding said garment into said pouch such that generally all of said outer shell is located in said pouch.

27. The method of claim 26 further comprising the step of, after said folding step, closing said upper and lower mouths.

28. The method of claim 26 wherein said upper mouth is located on a generally opposite side of said pouch relative to said upper mouth.

29. The method of claim 26 wherein said pouch is located in an internal position wherein said pouch is generally located inside said outer shell during said providing step, and wherein the method includes the step of, prior to said folding step, moving said pouch to an external position wherein said pouch is generally located outside said outer shell.

30. The method of claim 29 wherein said pouch is located in an inverted configuration when said pouch is said external position as compared to when said pouch is in said internal position.

31. The method of claim 26 wherein said folding step includes arranging said garment such that said garment extends at least partially through both of said mouths.

32. The method of claim 31 wherein said upper mouth is coupled to said outer shell generally about the perimeter of said upper mouth, and wherein at least one arm of said garment extends through said lower mouth during said folding step.

33. The method of claim 26 wherein said pouch is located in an internal position wherein said pouch is generally located inside said outer shell during said providing step, and wherein the method includes the step of, prior to said folding step, moving said pouch to an external position wherein said pouch is generally located outside said outer shell, and wherein said outer shell is
5 shaped to fit over the arms, chest, torso and legs of a wearer, and wherein said folding step includes inverting both of said arms of said outer shell such that at least part of each arm is passed through both mouths of said pouch.

34. The method of claim 33 further comprising the step of, after said inverting step, inserting said torso portion of said outer shell into said pouch and then inserting said legs of said outer shell into said pouch.

35. The method of claim 26 wherein said pouch is fixedly coupled to said outer shell generally around the perimeter of said upper mouth.

36. The method of claim 26 wherein said outer shell is abrasion, flame and heat resistant and can resist igniting, burning, melting, dripping or separation at a temperature of 500° F for at least five minutes.

37. The method of claim 36 wherein said garment further includes a moisture barrier located generally inside of said outer shell such that when said garment is worn said moisture barrier is located generally between said outer shell and a wearer of said garment, said moisture barrier being generally co-extensive with said outer shell and being made of a material that is
5 generally liquid impermeable and generally moisture vapor permeable.

38. The method of claim 37 wherein said garment further includes a thermal liner located generally inside said outer shell such that when said garment is worn said thermal liner is located generally between said outer shell and a wearer of said garment.